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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 23 July 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israeli war crimes and State terrorism against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, continue to escalate. In the pre-dawn hours (Palestine time) of today, an Israeli F-16 war plane fired a missile at a three-storey apartment building in the area of Yarmouk in northern Gaza City. This air strike killed 15 Palestinians and wounded more than 150 people. Among those killed in the attack were nine infants and children, ranging between the ages of two months and 13 years. In addition to the human devastation, the building hit, as well as at least four other homes, was destroyed in the attack on this densely populated civilian neighbourhood.

Israel, the occupying Power, declared that this military attack was in fact carried out as a targeted killing. This repugnant practice of extrajudiciary execution has been repeatedly condemned by the international community and constitutes a war crime. Today, however, the occupying Power took this practice to a new, extreme level, as the occupying forces knowingly and deliberately killed innocent civilians in the attack along with the target person, Salah Shehada. Clearly, there was no way that such a military strike would not produce such tragic results in terms of civilian deaths and injuries and physical destruction.

This Israeli assault represents the first blatant war crime committed by the Israeli occupying forces since the entry into force this month of the International Criminal Court. This action definitely falls within the jurisdiction of the court and, as such, measures to bring the perpetrators to justice should be taken. At the same time, this latest Israeli war crime was committed at a time when serious efforts were being undertaken to curb the violence and restore some cooperative measures between the two sides. Obviously, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, who labelled the crime a "great success", is once more trying his utmost to prevent any progress towards restoring a meaningful, peaceful process. Mr. Sharon and his lieutenants must be held responsible for such actions and the ensuing results.

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The above-mentioned Israeli war crime comes after the recent demolition of the homes of families of suspected Palestinian suicide bombers as well as a series of threats by Israeli officials to deport some or all of those family members. Such actual or threatened measures are illegal and prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, which is applicable to all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem. Further, they represent a collective punishment as well as a war crime under international humanitarian law and the statute of the International Criminal Court, and the international community is obligated to take measures against the perpetrators of these crimes.

All of the above is happening while the Israeli occupying forces continue with their reoccupation of most Palestinian cities and towns in the occupied West Bank. The military siege of those areas, including round-the-clock curfews, lifted only intermittently, has confined hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to their homes and has compounded the economic and social devastation already caused by continuous closure and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods and the widespread physical destruction. At the same time, the Israeli military siege on the headquarters of President Yasser Arafat in Ramallah continues, seriously obstructing the work of the Palestinian Authority.

All of these Israeli violations and crimes are suffocating and indeed killing any potential for peace between the two sides. Moreover, the tragic situation caused by the continuing Israeli occupation and the incessant military assaults and the resulting humanitarian crisis being faced by the Palestinian people is being further exacerbated while the international community continues to stand idly by, turning a blind eye to the devastation and destruction being wrought by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people.

In follow-up to my previous 131 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, dated from 29 September 2000 to 28 June 2002 (A/55/432-S/2000/921; A/55/437-S/2000/930; A/55/450-S/2000/957; A/55/466-S/2000/971; A/55/474-S/2000/984; A/55/490-S/2000/993; A/ES-10/39-S/2000/1015; A/ES-10/40-S/2000/1025; A/ES-10/42-S/2000/1068; A/ES-10/43-S/2000/1078; A/ES-10/44-S/2000/1093; A/ES-10/45-S/2000/1104; A/ES-10/46-S/2000/1107; A/ES-10/47-S/2000/1116; A/ES-10/48-S/2000/1129; A/ES-10/49-S/2000/1154; A/ES-10/50-S/2000/1173; A/ES-10/51-S/2000/1185; A/ES-10/52-S/2000/1206; A/ES-10/53-S/2000/1247; A/ES-10/54-S/2001/7; A/ES-10/55-S/2001/33; A/ES-10/56-S/2001/50; A/ES-10/57-S/2001/101; A/ES-10/58-S/2001/131; A/ES-10/59-S/2001/156; A/ES-10/60-S/2001/175; A/ES-10/61-S/2001/189; A/ES-10/64-S/2001/209; A/ES-10/65-S/2001/226; A/ES-10/66-S/2001/239; A/ES-10/67-S/2001/255; A/ES-10/68-S/2001/284; A/ES-10/69-S/2001/295; A/ES-10/70-S/2001/304; A/ES-10/71-S/2001/314; A/ES-10/72-S/2001/332; A/ES-10/75-S/2001/352; A/ES-10/76-S/2001/372; A/ES-10/79-S/2001/418; A/ES-10/80-S/2001/432; A/ES-10/81-S/2001/447; A/ES-10/82-S/2001/463; A/ES-10/83-S/2001/471; A/ES-10/84-S/2001/479; A/ES-10/85-S/2001/486; A/ES-10/86-S/2001/496; A/ES-10/87-S/2001/504; A/ES-10/88-S/2001/508; A/ES-10/89-S/2001/544; A/ES-10/90-S/2001/586; A/ES-10/91-S/2001/605; A/ES-10/92-S/2001/629; A/ES-10/93-S/2001/657; A/ES-10/94-S/2001/669; A/ES-10/95-S/2001/686; A/ES-10/96-S/2001/697; A/ES-10/97-S/2001/708; A/ES-10/98-S/2001/717; A/ES-10/99-S/2001/742; A/ES-10/100-S/2001/754; A/ES-10/101-S/2001/783; A/ES-10/102-S/2001/785;

A/ES-10/103-S/2001/798; A/ES-10/104-S/2001/812; A/ES-10/105-S/2001/814; A/ES-10/107-S/2001/821; A/ES-10/108-S/2001/826; A/ES-10/111-S/2001/880; A/ES-10/112-S/2001/918; A/ES-10/114-S/2001/928; A/ES-10/115-S/2001/932; A/ES-10/116-S/2001/941; A/ES-10/117-S/2001/971; A/ES-10/118-S/2001/989; A/ES-10/119-S/2001/991; A/ES-10/121-S/2001/1007; A/ES-10/122-S/2001/1024; A/ES-10/123-S/2001/1036; A/ES-10/124-S/2001/1084; A/ES-10/125-S/2001/1092; A/ES-10/126-S/2001/1118; A/ES-10/128-S/2001/1149; A/ES-10/129-S/2001/1166; A/ES-10/133-S/2001/1239; A/ES-10/134-S/2001/1261; A/ES-10/136-S/2002/18; A/ES-10/137-S/2002/39; A/ES-10/138-S/2002/48; A/ES-10/139-S/2002/58; A/ES-10/140-S/2002/89; A/ES-10/141-S/2002/95; A/ES-10/142-S/2002/102; A/ES-10/143-S/2002/121; A/ES-10/144-S/2002/142; A/ES-10/145-S/2002/146; A/ES-10/146-S/2002/165; A/ES-10/147-S/2002/175; A/ES-10/148-S/2002/182; A/ES-10/149-S/2002/186; A/ES-10/150-S/2002/214; A/ES-10/151-S/2002/223; A/ES-10/152-S/2002/232; A/ES-10/154-S/2002/242; A/ES-10/155-S/2002/248; A/ES-10/156-S/2002/249; A/ES-10/157-S/2002/253, A/ES-10/158-S/2002/258; A/ES-10/159-S/2002/281; A/ES-10/160-S/2002/307; A/ES-10/161-S/2002/319; A/ES-10/162-S/2002/330; A/ES-10/163-S/2002/340; A/ES-10/164-S/2002/353; A/ES-10/165-S/2002/356; A/ES-10/166-S/2002/370; A/ES/10/167-S/2002/433; A/ES-10/168-S/2002/474; A/ES-10/169-S/2002/495; A/ES-10/173-S/2002/536; A/ES-10/174-S/2002/555; A/ES-10/175-S/2002/610; A/ES-10/176-S/2002/617; A/ES-10/177-S/2002/641; A/ES-10/178-S/2002/650; A/ES-10/179-S/2002/654; A/ES-10/180-S/2002/686; A/ES-10/181-S/2002/697; A/ES-10/182-S/2002/699; A/ES-10/183-S/2002/717; and A/ES-10/184-S/2002/738), it is my profound regret to inform you that since my last letter to you, at least 35 more Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed by Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of Palestinian martyrs killed since 28 September 2000 to 1,705 people. (The names of the martyrs that have been identified thus far are contained in the annex to the present letter.)

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 23 July 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem* (Wednesday, 10 July-Tuesday, 23 July 2002)

Wednesday, 10 July 2002

1. Rami Odeh Al-Katash

Thursday, 11 July 2002

1. Zohair Tawfik Awad
2. Majdi Mahmoud Abu Hajeb

Friday, 12 July 2002

1. Mo'een Ali Al-Adeeny (13 years old)
2. Khaled Jamal Al-Khateeb
3. Imad Subhi Abu Zuhra
4. Mahmoud Hassan Abu Shosha
5. Jamal Yousef Odeh

Sunday, 14 July 2002

1. Ghazi Jamal Abu Ebyat
2. Nidal Ahmed Al-Amody

Monday, 15 July 2002

1. Mahmoud Samer Abdelrahman Helal

Wednesday, 17 July 2002

1. Bashar Hantoli (18 years old)

Thursday, 18 July 2002

1. Ammer Hantoli
2. Ahmed Abu Ridaha (8 years old)
3. Fadi Al-Ejel (18 years old)
4. Annas Abu Elba

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 1,705.

Saturday, 20 July 2002

1. Abdel Abu Shabbab

Monday, 22 July 2002

1. Imad Abu Eisha

Tuesday, 23 July 2002

1. Salah Shehada
2. Leila Shehada (wife of Mr. Shehada)
3. Iman Salah Shehada (14 years old — daughter of Mr. Shehada)
4. Zaher Nassar
5. Mona Al-Huwaity
6. Mohammed Al-Huwaity (3 years old)
7. Subhi Al-Huwaity (4 years old)
8. Mohammed Al-Shawwa
9. Ahmad Al-Shawwa (5 years old)
10. Iman Mattar
11. Dunya Mattar (2 months old)
12. Diana Mattar (5 years old)
13. Mohammed Mattar (4 years old)
14. Ayman Mattar (2 years old)
15. Ala' Mattar (11 years old)
16. Ahmed Ayesh
17. Tamer Abu Irmana